



Greenwich Village, 1818

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1918

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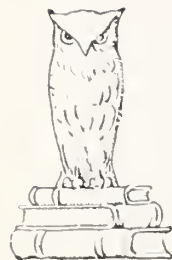
HISTORICAL SKETCH
OF
GRAMMAR SCHOOL No. 3

GROVE AND HUDSON STREETS
NEW YORK CITY

BY
CHARLES A. HALE, Historian
(Class of '82)

Organized May 25th, 1818

COMPLIMENTS OF
THE B. D L. SOUTHERLAND ASSOCIATION
(Alumni of Public School No. 3)
A. D. 1918



INTRODUCTION

ONE of the products of our free institutions is the Public School. It was a necessary institution, designed to complete the true spirit of a free and enlightened people, for it not only qualifies them for self-government by instilling into the minds of the pupils such information and knowledge as will enable them to properly perform those civic duties which the obligations of American citizenship will later impose upon them, and which are somewhat exacting if a man be patriotic enough not to shirk them, but it also makes them competent to provide for themselves and maintain their families with some degree of comfort, if not in a luxurious manner.

Aside from this important matter of education, the Public School is one of the greatest instrumentalities for the promotion of democracy that exists, for it permits no class distinctions, and in the classroom and playground every pupil is placed on the same level, in the former gradually becoming accustomed to speak in public without feeling embarrassed, and in the latter the physical side of his nature is developed and he becomes able to assert his rights when the necessity for it arises.

At present we not only utilize the school building for the instruction of the youth, but for civic purposes also, and the public forum has been established therein where public questions are considered and discussed.

lectures delivered, and even dancing and other social diversions indulged in, so that, all in all, the taxpayers now receive the largest possible returns from their investment. This new departure in the use of our school properties tends to emphasize the social, ethical and political sides of man's nature and, by bringing him into closer contact with his neighbors, promotes fraternity and patriotism.

The first school on Manhattan Island was established by the Dutch at New Amsterdam in 1637 and Adam Rcelantsen was appointed Schoolmaster. The house where he taught school, erected in 1642, stood on Stone Street on what is now the Produce Exchange, and its site was marked by a tablet in 1910 by the Schoolmasters' Club of New York.

One of the leaders in the movement for genuine public education in this country was the great statesman, Thomas Jefferson, who first introduced into the Virginia Legislature in 1779 a bill providing for a very comprehensive plan for universal education which met the most discouraging opposition; and, although he did not live to see his ideas carried out, yet in 1818, the year in which our own school was established, some of his suggestions were adopted and an impetus given to universal education, and as a result of this agitation the University of Virginia was founded in 1820.

In the beginning of the 19th century there were three ways open

to the children of New York City by which they could procure an education—by means of schools maintained by the different religious denominations, by private schools and by charity schools—but as all combined were inadequate to meet the demands imposed upon them, certain prominent citizens in 1805 organized The Free School Society of New York, with De Witt Clinton, then Mayor of the City and afterwards Governor of the State, as its President, and in May, 1806, it established Free School No. 1 in the lower part of the City, and on November 13th, 1811, it opened Free School No. 2 in Henry Street.

In 1812 the State of New York started the first system of public education adjusted to the political and social conditions of the new nation, and probably had the most effective schools of that period, but it was not until between 1835 and 1860 that the people were fully willing to contribute towards a general public school system, making it entirely free, or to develop it consistently in all directions.

In 1842 the New York Legislature created the Board of Education of New York City, but it was not until the year 1853 that it acquired general supervision over all the free schools of the future metropolis, during which year The Free School Society transferred its schools to the Board of Education of the city.

GRAMMAR SCHOOL No. 3

Early in 1818 the Trustees of The Free School Society saw the importance of establishing a school in the northwestern section of the city and having received information that a room on the second floor of the old Watch House or Police Station, corner of Christopher and Hudson Streets, could be procured from the corporation of the city for school purposes, appointed a committee consisting of Thomas C. Taylor, Najah Taylor and John R. Murray, to make application for the premises, and if found suitable, to prepare them for the reception of pupils. It reported on May 1st that the arrangements had been made and Shepherd Johnston, who had been trained in Free School No. 1, was appointed teacher at five hundred dollars per year. He was the pioneer of a large number of teachers who were trained under the direction of the Society.

Grammar School No. 3 was opened on May 25, 1818, with 51 pupils, the number being increased to 196 before June 5th. It increased in numbers so rapidly that at the meeting of the Board, held on June 23d, it was reported that 216 scholars had been admitted, with a regular attendance of over two hundred, and the room not being large enough, the upper floor was then taken for school purposes.

On December 4th the Board of Trustees took the following action :

"Resolved, that, on account of the increased size of Shepherd Johnston's School and the satisfactory discharge of duty on his part, his salary be increased to \$800 to date from the first of November last."

The great increase in the number of pupils at No. 3 rendered additional space necessary. A committee was therefore appointed and in December a report was submitted recommending that a new building be erected on the lots granted by Trinity Church at the corner of Grove and Hudson Streets and at the same time plans and estimates were submitted for it, the estimated cost being \$8,500. The recommendations were adopted.

The tenure of the ground, as granted by the Corporation of Trinity Church, did not secure it absolutely to The Free School Society, and at the following meeting the matter was reconsidered and a committee consisting of John R. Murray, William Torrey and Benjamin Clark was appointed to consult with the Vestry of Trinity Church to ascertain if the privileges desired could not be obtained. This conference resulted in a proposition that if the Society would release a certain portion of the property on Hudson Street, the Vestry would convey the title to the remainder in fee simple to the Society. These terms were deemed favorable and the committee was directed to consummate the arrangement.

The negotiations were terminated, however, by the payment of \$1,250.00 on the part of the Society as purchase money for the whole of the lots.

The first school building of old No. 3 was a wooden structure, 45 feet by 80 feet, erected in 1820 on Grove Street near Hudson Street, and was opened for boys on October 15th of that year, and for girls the following Monday, October 22d, and after having been altered and repaired many times, it was finally replaced in 1860 by the handsome brick and stone structure which was the school-home we boys loved so much and which now, sad to say, exists only in fond memory's recollection. In 1888 an annex was built on the old schoolhouse which served its purpose for a time but by the time the next decade rolled around had become cramped for room. While the school authorities were contemplating another change in old No. 3, it was swept away by a disastrous fire on February 14th, 1905, its library containing many valuable books, oil paintings (the gifts of former graduating classes) and its celebrated electrical apparatus being consumed by the conflagration. In 1905-06 the present school No. 3 was erected, to which the auditorium was added in 1916, and in the same year The B. D. L. Southerland Association of Grove Street Grammar School No. 3 was instrumental in having it named the B. D. L. Southerland School in honor of its former beloved Principal.

In the early days of our school it was famous for its "sand system"



GRAMMAR SCHOOL No. 3
Corner Grove and Hudson Streets. This Building Erected 1860
Destroyed by Fire on February 14th, 1905

which was a table provided for the youngest scholars; it was fifteen feet long and six inches wide and was divided longitudinally into two parts, one-half being set off so as to form a shallow tray, with an enclosing rail or ledge about one inch high. The bottom of the tray was stained or painted black and over it was spread a thin coating of sand. The table was provided with a "sand-smoother" made of sole leather into the edge of which three notches were cut so that, when used, it left three ridges or rules the entire length of the table. In the sand thus ruled the beginners were taught to form letters, using a stick about as thick as a quill and four inches long.

In its day this sand system was considered a great improvement and so remarkable that when General LaFayette was invited to inspect the work accomplished by the schools of The Free School Society, he was escorted, on September 10th. 1824, to School No. 3, where a certificate of membership in the Society was presented to him by Vice-President Bleecker in the girls' room in the presence of "many of the Trustees, the Mayor, several Aldermen and a large assemblage of Ladies and Gentlemen. A pretty little poetic address to the General was then spoken in concert by a number of the girls." In the boys' room "an address written for the occasion was delivered by a small lad on behalf of his fellows." About 500 boys and 300 girls were in attendance.

This important event has now been marked in enduring bronze by one of old No. 3's former pupils, a member of a celebrated family of boys who attended the school in the late seventies and early eighties, Charles Rollinson Lamb, who also designed the tablet whose inscription reads as follows:

"On September 10th, 1824, MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, Major-General in the American Army during the War of the Revolution, visited Public School No. 3, which was selected as the Best example of the Public School System established by the Free School Society of the City of New York. In Memory of that event this Tablet is erected by a former pupil of the school under the direction of the Board of Education, A. D. 1911."

The following excerpts from the minutes of the Board of Trustees are of interest to us:

November 5, 1824:

Crackers and cheese for children and carriage hire attending LaFayette,
\$10.60 and \$27.43—\$38.03

November 2, 1825:

A handsome specimen of needlework, executed and presented to the Trustees by Elizabeth Onderdonk, a pupil in No. 3, was ordered to be framed under the direction of the Committee of Supplies and hung in the Session Room (which was located in Public School No. 1).

January 6, 1826:

The Trustees directed the Committee of Supplies to present Elizabeth Onderdonk, who worked the LaFayette sampler, with a Plaid Cloak or other suitable reward.

As the future metropolis continued to grow, the old Village became what is now known as the Ninth Ward, and it was within its confines where, up to the beginning of this century, a large proportion of the American-born population had congregated. In 1896 nearly every one of the three thousand pupils of old No. 3 had been born of American parentage within a mile of the schoolhouse, and at that time it was said that it prided itself upon being a distinctively American school.

Old No. 3 was long regarded as one of the best conducted and equipped schools in the city. Prior to 1880 and before electricity had reached its present high possibilities, it possessed quite an electrical outfit, which at that time was considered remarkable, and sometimes Mr. Southerland used the apparatus to the delight and edification of the boys. In the examinations for entrance to the College of the City of New York it always stood very high in the number of its successful applicants, and the student receiving the highest percentage became a distinctive individual among his fellows. We were perhaps more fortunate than any other school when the following list of rewards and prizes distributed at the June receptions

are considered: Gold Watch, by John Wilson, for highest percentage in the college examination; gold medal, by Andrew J. Whiteside, for second highest percentage in the college examination; gold medal, by Mr. Cooley, for scholarship during entire year; gold medal, by Miss Mary E. Forsythe, for excellency in music; the "Sobel Prizes" (books), by Isidor Sobel, for highest percentage in June examinations; book, "Senior Class of No. 3 Prize," for highest percentage in examination for diplomas; the "Quattlander Prizes," for the highest percentage in each study in the College examinations; and the presentation of gold and silver medals for "Class Prizes" for record during the school term.

On special occasions exercises were always held and these were "Red Letter" days in the history of the school. Much originality was developed and shown in the programs. Among the most notable were the Christmas celebrations held during Mr. Southerland's administration, which were certainly original when judged by the combined noise of tooting horns, whistles and every conceivable contrivance intended to produce sound. The general pandemonium was conducted by Mr. Southerland, assisted by the Trustees, each of whom was provided with six-foot fog horns, but the noise suddenly ceased at a given signal from the Principal, showing his wonderful discipline. Mention should also be made of the Commencement exercises held in June, which were exceptionally fine. During the Wash-

ington Centennial in 1889 a bust of the Father of his Country by Mr. McDonald was presented to the school and on that occasion the sculptor, himself, was present, thus lending interest to the affair.

At this same Centennial the school was represented in one of the parades which took place during the celebration, the boys being drilled by Messrs. Whiteside, Kidd and Carey, teachers in the school at that time. As a prize, the 71st Regiment, N. G., N. Y., presented a beautiful silk flag to the school that marched and made the best appearance. The award was made to School No. 3, and was one of its treasured possessions.

Then when Mr. Southerland retired as Principal on June 30th, 1902, the school took special note of same, one of the teachers writing a piece of poetry to mark the passing of a long and successful career. For quite some time the school was fortunate in having the services of Miss Mary E. Forsythe as teacher of music and her skill along the lines of her profession was so successful that No. 3's boys had the reputation of being very good singers and this fact was often commented upon by visitors attending our school functions and this was more remarkable when the character of her music was taken into consideration for she generally selected pieces of merit and difficult of execution.

At the time of the Paris Exposition, a copy book, representative of the penmanship of the boys of No. 3, which was considered of the finest.

was sent to France, and although each column of the book was written by a different boy, yet the pages had the appearance of having been penned by one hand. The writing in this book was considered by the judges to be the best penmanship at the exhibition.

Teachers have served longer in this school, and with fewer changes, than in any other in New York City. Mr. Benjamin De Lamater Southerland, who was born on April 10th, 1829, was connected with it during the greater part of his life, first as a pupil in 1838, then as a teacher until twenty-four years of age, when he resigned to become Principal of a school in Flushing, L. I. In 1856 he returned to No. 3 and became Vice-Principal and teacher of its highest class. In 1867 he succeeded the celebrated Dr. David Patterson as Principal, a position he held throughout a long and honored career, relinquishing it only when failing health compelled him to do so on June 30th, 1902. He passed away on December 1st, 1905. Mr. Southerland was a Christian gentleman possessed of those qualifications which are essential to the successful instructor; he loved his boys and worked indefatigably for their interests—often far into the night—and although the strictest of disciplinarians, his efforts on behalf of his boys were finally appreciated by them and his affection reciprocated, for they knew that he had done what he thought best for their good. It can be truthfully said that no one ever heard a No. 3 boy speak disre-



BENJAMIN D. L. SUTHERLAND
Principal of School No. 3 from 186~~2~~₇ to 1902

spectfully of his Principal or refer to him in any other terms than those of the highest esteem and respect. While he, like others, might have used his great mental powers and abilities to advance his own interests, he chose rather to place them at the disposal of the rising generation, and so well did he perform his task that to-day some of his boys occupy high positions in the financial world as well as having pushed themselves well to the front in other lines of business and in the professions.

His talented assistant for a long period was Mr. Andrew J. Whiteside, "Dear Old Andy," who succeeded George H. Moore. He was born on May 4th, 1843, and was appointed a teacher in No. 3 on September 1st, 1873, remaining with the school until September 12th, 1892, when he was appointed Principal of School No. 8 in King Street. At the time of his death on October 24th, 1906, he was Principal of P. S. No. 69 in West 54th Street.

Teaching is undoubtedly the greatest of the professions, whether reckoned by the results on others or the teacher himself. He strives day by day to instruct the youth committed to his care while at the same time there unconsciously emanates from his personality certain influences which, acting upon the plastic mind of the pupil in its formative period, create impressions that can never be effaced, and the result is that the latter's character is strengthened and his productive powers increased. To the

everlasting credit of both Mr. Southerland and Mr. Whiteside be it recorded that the influence of their lives and example upon the youth fortunate enough to have passed under their tutelage and to have shared in their friendship, left such an impress as to have changed the course of their lives and later years have testified to the value of their instruction as well as that of their co-laborers, the teachers of other grades.

The morning Mr. John Wilson first visited the school was one long to be remembered because he was so well pleased with what he beheld that he offered to present to the boy and girl passing the college examinations with the highest percentage a gold watch, which practice he continued for a few years and until he was financially unable to do so. The following boys won the coveted prize: John P. Laird, 1878; Thomas P. Fowler, 1879; Henry R. Carse, 1880; Arthur N. Decker, 1881; Charles E. Nylander, 1882, and although Frederick H. Knubel obtained the highest percentage in 1883, he only received a medal, the gold watch having been withdrawn. When the "John Wilson Prize" was first presented there was so much sympathy expressed for the boy who just missed it that Mr. Whiteside offered a gold medal for the applicant receiving the second highest percentage in the college examinations, the successful boys being Alexander Hartfield, 1880; Edgar C. Hebbard, 1881, and Charles A. Hale, 1882.

In an editorial of the New York *Times* some years ago appeared the following:

"Probably more New Yorkers of both local and National importance were born and bred in Greenwich Village than in any other neighborhood of Manhattan."

Among the school's well-known graduates and former pupils so far as we have been able to ascertain are:

Hon. Schuyler Colfax, ex-Speaker of House of Representatives, and elected in 1868

Vice-President of the United States with Gen. U. S. Grant as President.

Hon. David C. Broderick, United States Senator from California.

Rear-Admiral George W. Melville (of Arctic fame).

Rear-Admiral James H. Chasmer.

Hon. Edward M. Morgan, until recently Postmaster of New York City.

Hon. William F. Schneider, County Clerk of New York County, 3 terms.

Hon. Everett P. Wheeler, distinguished New York lawyer.

Hon. William J. A. Caffrey, State Senator from 9th Ward.

Major George W. Debevoise (Class of '49, of Hawkins' Regiment), still living.

Henry R. Carse, Vice-President Hanover National Bank.

Edgar C. Hebbard, Vice-President Guaranty Trust Co.

Augustus V. Heely, Vice-President Farmers' Loan & Trust Co.

William H. Rose, Secretary Broadway Savings Institution.

Alfred C. Andrews, Cashier Chase National Bank.

Arthur T. Billings, Assistant Secretary No. British & Mercantile Insurance Co.
Miss Stanleyetta Titus, first woman lawyer of New York.
Miss Mary F. Maguire, Principal P. S. No. 3.
John E. Wade, Principal P. S. No. 3 and P. S. No. 95.
Hon. Isidor Sobel, President Postmasters' Assn. of 1st Class Cities of U. S.
James R. McAfee, President George Hayes Co.
Hon. Charles W. Culkin, prominent politician.
Artists: Charles R. Lamb and William S. Eddy.
Merchants: William J. Dixon and David D. Acker (Acker, Merrill Co.).
Physicians: Dr. Alvah H. Newman, Dr. Walter S. Brouner, Dr. Harry J. Spalding.
Dr. Clifford B. MacIntyre, Dr. Charles A. Neafie.
Ministers: Rev. Frederick H. Knubel, Rev. George W. Grinton, Rev. Charles H. Cookman, Rev. Jacob Probst, Rev. William J. Lockhart, Rev. Albert G. Lawson.
Hon. George W. Olvany, Deputy Fire Commissioner, under Mayor Gaynor.
William V. Hudson, Secretary-Treasurer West Side Savings Bank.
Daniel H. Rogers, Mechanics & Metals Bank.
Bankers: John S. Scully, Charles D. Lithgow, William W. Cohen.
Clifford P. Hunt, Assistant Cashier, Bank of New York.
John J. Broderick, Treasurer, Hudson Trust Co.
Irving S. Gregory, Assistant Cashier, Merchants National Bank.
Moses Tanenbaum, Insurance.
John P. Laird, Assistant Cashier, Atlantic Bank.
Police Captains: William H. Scoble, Ed. J. Bourke.

HEAD MASTERS OR PRINCIPALS OF G. S. No. 3 SINCE ITS ORGANIZATION, MAY 25, 1818

BOYS' DEPARTMENT.

Shepherd Johnston, until March 22, 1825.
Benjamin F. Hart, until October 18, 1835.
Dr. David Patterson, until 1867.
Benjamin D. L. Southerland, until June 30, 1902.
Henry E. Jenkins, until February 14, 1905.
Bernard Cronson, until March, 1911.
John E. Wade, until February, 1912.

GIRLS' DEPARTMENT.

Miss Sarah F. Field, until May 15, 1821.
Miss Maria Field (sister), until 1825.
Miss Catherine R. Dean, until 1827.
Miss Frances M. Hart, until 1831.
Miss Isabella F. McCormack, until 1871.
Miss Elizabeth A. Pope, until 1903.
(For a time the men principals were in charge.)
Miss Mary Frances Maguire, until October 19, 1916.
Miss Loretto M. Rochester (at present).



B. D. L. SOUTHERLAND SCHOOL, P. S. No 3
Erected 1905-06

Among the many persons, more or less distinguished, who have been connected with old No. 3 at one time or another, either as teacher, Principal or Trustee, are the following: Trustees—Hon. James W. Booth, William J. Van Arsdale, Colonel Edward M. L. Ehlers, John P. Faure, Charles S. Wright, Arthur Kennedy, and James W. Farr. A former Principal, Henry E. Jenkins, and a former teacher of Class A, Cecil A. Kidd, are now District School Superintendents; James T. Carey, a former teacher of Class A, is now Principal of P. S. 110, Brooklyn; Edward C. Zabriskie, former teacher, is now Principal of the Washington Irving High School; and John E. Wade, former pupil, was Principal of No. 3 and is at present Principal of P. S. No. 95 in Clarkson Street.

One of the activities started at the Southerland School within the last few months is an experimental centre established by the Mayor's Committee of Women on National Defense. The main idea is to keep the children off the narrow streets where they are in danger from automobiles, etc., and to gather them into the old school where they are given lessons in sewing, cooking, knitting, dancing and dramatics. Once a week the children attend the Hudson Park Library for a story hour. The centre is opened for five days each week from three o'clock until six o'clock in the afternoon and on Saturdays from nine o'clock until six o'clock and is under the direction of the Board of Education, assisted by volunteers who

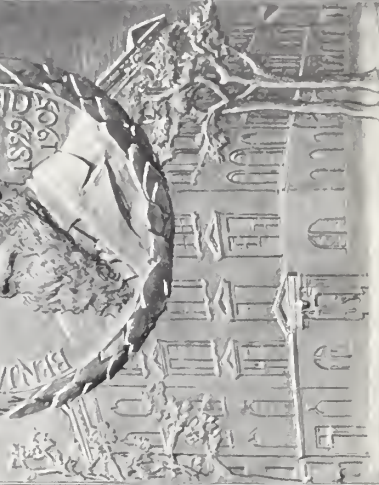
are interested in making better citizens of New York's youth. If this experiment proves to be a success other industrial and educational centres will be established in those parts of the city where hundreds of small children must either play in the streets or not play at all.

There has also been organized the B. D. L. Southerland Community Centre, under the direction of a former graduate (who is also a member of the Local School Board), whose activities include: Red Cross Auxiliary No. 228 with 94 members and Unit No. 271 of the Comforts Committee of the Navy League with 135 members. On Wednesday evenings a concert in conjunction with a Community Chorus is given free. A playground for boys is in operation four nights a week. At stated intervals talks are given on current events such as Food Conservation, etc. A class in military instruction for drafted men will be in operation for drills on the roof of the auditorium two evenings a week.

It is a pleasure to note that old No. 3 still keeps up to its reputation as a pioneer in all kinds of good work.

On the evening of Wednesday, November 14th, 1917, the B. D. L. Southerland Association of Grove Street Grammar School No. 3 commemorated the distinguished services of Mr. Southerland by presenting a beautiful bronze tablet in his honor. It was placed in the new auditorium. An attractive program had been arranged, the presentation ad-

THE PASSING YEARS DO NOW REVEAL
HIS PIERLESS WORK WAS FOR OUR WEAL



HE ENTERED GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO 3
IN 1838 LATER BECAME A TEACHER
APPOINTED PRINCIPAL 1867 RETIRED 1902
ERECTED BY THE
B.D. SOUTHERLAND ASSOCIATION
A.D. 1917

MADE IN
U.S.A.

dress having been delivered by the President of the Association, Mr. Charles C. Springhorn, and the acceptance for the Board of Education by the Honorable Ernest F. Eilert, one of the Commissioners, and for the B. D L. Southerland School, by its Principal, Miss Loretto M. Rochester.



HONOR ROLL **MEMBERS OF THE B. D L. SOUTHERLAND ASSOCIATION** **IN WAR SERVICE**

G. A. BURKE, '04.....Private, Army
 AUSTIN C. BAMFORD, '95.....1st Lieutenant, 165th Infantry, U. S. N. G.
 EDWIN F. COPELAND, '05.....Navy, Hospital Corps
 FRANK C. COLLINS, '92.....1st Lieut., Navy
 WILLIAM J. GRAHAM, '92.....Ensign, Navy, U. S. S. Pocahontas
 ANDREW J. HUDSON, '96.....Captain, Army
 MILTON F. HARRIS, '01.....1st Lieut., Army, Sanitary Corps, U. S. R.
 AUGUSTUS MacCOLLOM, '88.....1st Lieut., Navy, U. S. S. Indiana
 WILLIAM W. NEILSON, '02.....2nd Lieutenant, Army
 EDMUND O'BRIEN, '02.....Private, Army, P. M. Corps
 CHARLES H. SCOTT, '88.....1st Lieut., Army, 105th Infantry
 GEORGE E. STEEL, '80.....Medical Examiner, Aviation Corps
 EUGENE A. VAN NEST, '90.....Captain, Army



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